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September 27

My dear friend Harold,

I apologize for taking such an inexcusably long time to reply to your great letter. Hope you are still well and in good spirits. I certainly am, more so than at any time before. Things have worked out remarkably well for me at the law school. Right now, I'm at the YMCA in Jackson, Miss. Rent is only \$48 a month. Rooms are small but quite adequate, and I have free use of all phys ed facilities.

This is honestly the first chance I've had to write. I left Houston shortly after getting your epistle, and stayed one night in Long Beach, came up here and registered, sat through two classes, and went back, then drove over to New Orleans ~~twice~~ (now only 1 hr. drive, with I-10 finally completed)  
*4 times*

There is so much I want to tell you. My parents say news coverage in Houston has been non-existent. I managed to get in to the most critical part of Garrison's trial. If it had been possible in any way, I wish you could have been with me. You would have wept, as I did, many times. I have come to accept the fact that the Pentagon has been extremely successful in establishing a police state, and that elements of this structure are responsible for several murders. But I was not prepared for what I witnessed at Garrison's trial.

Like you, I have known all along that he is innocent, that Gervais is a cheap crook and liar, and the motivation for this prosecution, which is strictly political. It was like a star chamber proceeding. The judge was openly hostile to everything Garrison said or did, and he is now handling his own case. The shock of the century came when Gervais testified. He recanted his recantations, took back his many statements that the case was a fraud, a frame-up by the Justice Dept., and even had the unmitigated temerity to say he was now testifying to cleanse his soul. The bastard. One woman said he lied faster than she could think, and I agreed. Anyway, he has gone back to being a government stooge, and claims the govt.'s case against Garrison is a solid and honest one. Notwithstanding the fact that one lawyer, Guy Johnson, testified later that Gervais came back to M.O. from his lucrative position in Canada, and offered to auction his testimony to the highest bidder. Russell Shonekas, another lawyer who was present at this meeting, confirmed this to some degree, although claiming atty.-client privilege. Two other men, a Mr. Callery and a Mr. Nims are co-defendants. All other defendants, including Soule and Frey, have turned states' evidence. Garrison did a masterful job of cross-examining Gervais. I think he destroyed him, by taking him carefully over his lengthy statement in Canada point by point, where he said it was all a fraud, and so on. He had to admit they were lies now, if he claims to be telling the truth. It is just simply incredible. Even you would have been astonished.

The night Gervais went into Garrison's home to hand some money (which Garrison said he thought he was asking him to hold for him while he went out of town) they had agents all over the place. One was on the street next to the Garrison home. Another hid in the trunk of Gervais' car. There were at least a couple others. And secret mikes all over the place. It was like an ambush. They surrounded him, and tricked him, and planted the money on him. He pointed out later that it was not odd that they found it in the house, because money does not seem to melt away overnight. The tapes were altered, an expert testified. I wasn't there, but someone said it was convincing. Gervais kept singing to Mrs. Garrison: "A pretty girl is like a pretty tune. A pretty girl is like a melody..." Given the fact that Gervais cannot sing, there is said to be an odd break in the song as recorded, where the discussion of the payoffs begins. I could go on and on about this, as the emotional shock waves have not yet subsided within me. You are the only person I know who can understand my feelings, and this is why I write to you this way.

Garrison quizzed each of the Federal agents (some were FBI, others were IRS, and maybe others), and got them each to say that they had been agents for 15 years, 23 years, and so on, and never before had they used this sort of tactic, hiding a mike in somebody's clothing and sending him into a house like that.

I don't know. Your old friend Aynesworth was there. I spoke to him, just hello, and he told Rosemary James, who was agreeing, that Gervais made a good impression on the jury. I just can't believe it.

At the end of Pershing and the agents, the next day, I followed Garrison out of the courtroom over to the Royal Orleans, and he went into the lounge with some attys. and other men. I waited outside for almost 2 hrs. until they all left, and there sat Garrison at the table all alone. This, by the way, is the first time I have ever seen him in person. In all that time that I was working for him, where you recall seeing me, he never spoke to me, answered my memoranda, or subsequent letters, phone calls, and visits to his office. I always missed him, and never got into his office. So I was real nervous walking into that bar, going over to meet him, at long last. It was a thrilling experience, and I did not know what to expect. What would be his reaction? Would he ignore me? Throw his drink in my face? Slap me? Shout at me?

In all my life, with the sole exception of you, I have never been greeted with such immediate warmth and friendship by a famous person. I've met a few movie stars, authors (inc. Mark Lane), and in 1966, Mr. Richard M. Nixon. Theirs was a rather plastic greeting, accompanied with a fulsome handshake. Garrison's deep sincerity was obvious at the outset. He is a

big guy, even sitting down. He looked like his pictures, tough, determined, but awfully weary and battle-fatigued. I introduced myself: "Mr. Garrison?" "Yes!"--firm, receptive-- "How do you do, sir. My name is Jim Brown. I did some work for you in 1968." "Yeah, Jim, I remember you quite well." I almost dropped my teeth. But then I figured well, you know he's a politician. A State Senator here in Jackson pretended to know me, and I got him to sign my application to law school. We'd just met.

But with Garrison it was different. "You're living in Mississippi," he recalled. "Yes, I remember you did some good work for us, and handed in some good material, very helpful, things that I was aware of, but you put it together quite well." "I'm sorry I haven't been too good on my correspondence, but between my back trouble and this trouble, I haven't had much time." At that point I could have forgiven Judas Iscariot. My heart was so full, I still get emotional just thinking about it, and it'll be a week ago tomorrow. Imagine the man in that situation remembering me, an individual of relative insignificance, and apologizing!! I forgot to say he invited me to sit down by him right off. We sat and talked for a good while. He even asked me how I thought he was doing, and we discussed the poor press coverage. I offered him my home in Long Beach, if he needed a place to rest, and he said "No, the only place I go to rest is in the goddam desert. I just Can't stand this climate!"

He told me I had picked the winning side, that the Pentagon axis powers were losing, and the murder machine was failing. That, he said, was the reason for Watergate. It is also the reason for Agnew. "That's no accident. You see, it's a dual removal." He was delighted that this amused me. I loved the way he put that. He has a clever way of backing two points into each other. He is an enormously charming man, quite witty (as you know), and intensely brilliant. He has an amazing ability to call forth facts from the distant reaches of history and literature, and insert them in exactly the appropriate place.

I showed him a transcript of Nixon's 8/22 conference, and he underlined the reference to Oswald with his glasses. "Yes, it says here, 'If the late Robert Kennedy had initiated just ten more wiretaps, he could have learned about the Oswald plan.' Now that's very interesting, because the govt. said there was no conspiracy, so presumably all they could've expected to hear was Oswald talking to Oswald." Needless to say, this amused me highly.

There was much more. The conversation finally ended with him saying he'd be back in gear in about 3-4 months, and sometime after that he'd be needing some teams to map out new areas-- "and you'll be the first person we'll call on." He also said next time I was in town to call him, and he'd show me around the office.

I was so touched I could hardly talk. I said I'd definitely keep in touch, and that I see Lou Ivon every 3-4 mos. He said, yes, that was a good liadson; he's the top man. Lou, by the way, is running for Criminal Sheriff, as you may know. When I told him I was in law school, he said "Get as much Constitutional law as you can get, and as little procedure as possible. In all this case, I have yet to open one single lawbook on Federal procedure, and I've made a point of not doing so. You see, the rules are restrictive, so I get away with more by not knowing them."

The conversation ended by my telling him, "I keep in close touch with Harold Weisberg, and he told me to post him about this case." He replied: "He's a sweet guy. Tell him hello for me when you write him again."

With that, we parted, and I left so jubilant, I had to celebrate. I treated myself to a movie on Canal St., "American Graffiti" about some teenagers growing up in 1962 (which is now an era, I'm getting so old!), and it was delightful. I ate lots and lots of popcorn.

I really believe he means well, in spite of his incommunicativeness.

My joyous mood ended in sadness the next day. I was standing at the door of the courtroom when Garrison came in, and I distinctly heard him say to an atty., "Have you made arrangements for my wife?" I asked a man next to me if I heard right, and he said that that was exactly what he said. I later learned that the Garrisons are living separately, but are not divorced as I had thought. I do hope that their problems stem from this trial, so that once it is over, they can get back together.

At noon, we recessed and I walked behind him. In the corridor stood his wife, and five of the most darling and wonderful kids I have ever seen. It is a sweet and lovely family. Garrison had not seen them for some time. The kids are real young, although Garrison is 52. His wife is a goddess, more beautiful than her pictures. He bent way over and kissed each of the kids, and called them by nicknames, like "Skipper", "Spark", and he called the little girl "Wizzle Wack". The youngest boy, Eberhard, had no nickname, and slept through a great deal of the trial. I stood over by the water fountain during this touching scene, out of the way. Garrison started to cry, and I was so deeply moved. I thought here is the man who took on the whole Federal government, and withstood the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, crying. You cannot imagine what it was like to see that big man crying that way. He spoke to those little children so sweetly and tenderly. Then what touched me most, in all of this, he came over to get a drink of water, and spoke to me and remembered me.

The TV reporters tried to get him on camera, but he couldn't talk he was so choked. He took the family across the street to eat at Brennan's. I went to a sandwich shop out of the quarter on the other side of Canal and ate like a horse, and then cried and cried. It is so sad, and so unfair.

His closing argument to the jury was magnificent. I won't repeat it all, because it's in the papers, which I'll send you if you would like. He said Gervais lied so much that he had to get his neighbor to call his dog for him. And he said he didn't know the room number of Gervais' headquarters at the Fontainebleau, but he said "I can bet you the Gideon Bible's been gone from there a long time." Said Gervais stole what he couldn't con people out of. It was also eloquent and moving.

At this moment, the jury has been out for two days, and no verdict. I had to leave after his final argument, to get back here for a class. There was nothing I could've accomplished by staying any longer. The papers here do not cover it, so I have to walk a mile or two to a newstand to get the States-Item, which does not sound hopeful. It may end in a mistrial, which is almost worse than a conviction, because I doubt the U.S. will try again.

Before leaving for here, I checked at the courthouse in Houston on your friend, Dione T. Turner. I spoke to a Lt, in the Harris County Sheriff's office. He was polite, but refused to let me see anything. Said all records are confidential, and open only to attys. and lawmen. He did look them up, though. First he asked me, in typical fashion, "White or colored?" What difference that makes, I know not, and the opposite of white should be more easily black. But some are persistent. So I just said white. He looked in one group, and it wasn't there. He went way around somewhere else and found them. I could see on the brown envelope that they have her name spelled "Diane", as you thought. I could see fingerprints through the page, but light did not pass through anything else. He held it away from me. There were two sheets, and they looked different from each other, I think. He studied them a long time, evidently alot of writing on them. Then all he would tell me, after much persuasion, was that she had been picked up twice on felony charges in the city. That is all I could get out of him. I'm sorry I couldn't do any better, but he was most adamant. I got the impression that the situation is bad. Wish I could tell you more.

It is a pleasure to send you copies of pp. from Roy Cohn's book, relative to Nixon's intervention to prevent investigation of CIA. Note that on the last page he speaks of West Coast radicals. The index lists "Ramparts" and gives that page number. Imagine Cohn praising Ramparts! Also, on the preceding pages he speaks about the Mathews incident, and how Nixon buttonholed McCarthy to delay him from announcing Mathews' resignation while the White House put out a release calling for it. This to make it look like McC did it under pressure from White House. Fred Cook, in his book on McCarthy, says Rogers was also there, and that they delayed him by talking about investigating the CIA.

I wish we could be together. Hope all is well with you and your sweet wife. Lengthy letter indicates to you my desire to have a long talk with you. I think of you often, and greatly enjoy your good letters.

Your friend always,

*Jim*